



CITY COUNCIL

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

20-207

No. _____

RESOLUTION

URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO ESTABLISH A VISITOR RESERVATION SYSTEM FOR THE HANAUMA BAY NATURE PRESERVE.

WHEREAS, in 1928, the land on which is situated the Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve ("Preserve"), formerly known as Hanauma Bay Nature Park, was deeded to the City and County of Honolulu ("City") by the Estate of Bernice Pauahi Bishop for use as a public park; and

WHEREAS, the Preserve encloses and adjoins the State of Hawaii-owned waters of Hanauma Bay; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, Hanauma Bay Marine Life Conservation District ("HBMLCD") was established as the State of Hawaii's first marine life conservation district to recognize its precious live reef environment and whose boundaries extend from the highwater mark seaward to a line across the Hanauma Bay's mouth from Palea Point on the left to Paioaluolu Point on the right; and

WHEREAS, the Preserve also serves as access control to the diverse marine life in the HBMLCD, both of which are natural resources of great interest to tourists and City residents alike; and

WHEREAS, the Preserve and adjoining HBMLCD are second only to Waikiki Beach as an Oahu visitor destination, with an estimated one million people visiting annually; and

WHEREAS, through Ordinance 96-19, a non-resident entrance fee to the Preserve and a fee for parking at the Preserve's parking lot were established; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, the Department of Parks and Recreation ("DPR") began closing the Preserve on Tuesdays for maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has referred to City parks, including the Preserve, as among the crown jewels of the City and has stated that one of the Mayor's top priorities has been to ensure that park facilities are maintained and improved so that City residents and visitors can thoroughly enjoy these "valuable City treasures"; and

WHEREAS, in May of 2019, a biological carrying capacity survey of the Preserve measuring visitor impacts on the HBMLCD (prepared for the DPR and the State Board



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of Land and Natural Resources) was completed for the period between May 2018 and May 2019 ("Survey"); and

WHEREAS, the Survey found that visitors to the Preserve and adjoining HBMLCD were a contributing factor to declines in coral cover, resource fish density, and water clarity at the Preserve; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency for the United States; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, the Governor of the State of Hawaii ("Governor") issued a proclamation declaring the existence of a state of emergency in the State due to the COVID-19 outbreak and invoking his authority under the Hawaii Emergency Management Act, Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 127A; and

WHEREAS, also on March 4, 2020, the Mayor issued an proclamation declaring the existence of a state of emergency in the City due to the COVID-19 outbreak and invoking his authority under the Hawaii Emergency Management Act; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization designated the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic of international concern; and

WHEREAS, both the Mayor and Governor have since issued supplemental proclamations/emergency orders that require City and State residents to, among other things, socially distance themselves, as much as possible, from others while in public; and

WHEREAS, additionally and to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, beginning March 20, 2020, the Mayor closed the Preserve to the public; and

WHEREAS, it has been reported that it appears that during the Preserve's closure, water clarity at the adjoining HBMLCD has improved and marine wildlife has become more plentiful; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that in light of the apparent improvements in the condition of the HBMLCD accessed through the Preserve during its closure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the findings of the above-mentioned biological carrying capacity survey completed in May 2019, the establishment of a visitor reservation



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system that would accurately count and limit the number of visitors (both commercial and non-commercial) to the Preserve would further facilitate the preservation, protection, and restoration of the natural resources within the HBMLCD that have apparently been degraded over the years due to the constant influx of visitors (e.g. lack of coral cover, reduced marine wildlife, reduced water quality, and sedimentation); and

WHEREAS, the Council further believes that in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the establishment of a visitor reservation system would further facilitate, among other things, social distancing practices mandated by the Governor and Mayor, because fewer visitors would be present in the Preserve at any one time; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the City Administration to establish a visitor reservation system that would limit the number of visitors (both commercial and non-commercial) to the Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve each day for purposes of preserving, protecting, and restoring the Hanauma Bay Marine Life Conservation District, and to facilitate social distancing practices mandated by the various proclamations and emergency orders issued by the Governor of the State of Hawaii and Mayor, respectively; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration is further urged to work with various stakeholders, including but not limited to, the Friends of Hanauma Bay, elected State and City district representatives, the State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, a representative or representatives of the Hawaii Kai Neighborhood Board, affected commercial entities, and representatives of the general public in its establishment and implementation of the visitor reservation system to ensure that the visitor reservation system balances the public interest in keeping the Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve open as a unique recreational and educational resource on one hand, and the need to preserve, protect, and restore the Hanauma Bay Marine Life Conservation District and its unique reef ecosystem on the other; and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, and the Director of Parks and Recreation.

INTRODUCED BY:

Tony Watson

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

AUG 18 2020

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers

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HONOLULU, HAWAII
C E R T I F I C A T E

RESOLUTION 20-207

Introduced: 08/19/20 By: TOMMY WATERS

Committee: PARKS, COMMUNITY
SERVICES AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS

Title: RESOLUTION URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO ESTABLISH A VISITOR RESERVATION SYSTEM FOR THE
HANAUMA BAY NATURE PRESERVE.

Voting Legend: * = Aye w/Reservations

08/25/20	PARKS, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS	CR-194 – RESOLUTION REPORTED OUT OF COMMITTEE FOR ADOPTION. 4 AYES: ELEFANTE, KOBAYASHI, PINE, TSUNEYOSHI.
09/09/20	COUNCIL	CR-194 AND RESOLUTION 20-207 WERE ADOPTED. 9 AYES: ANDERSON, ELEFANTE, FUKUNAGA, KOBAYASHI, MANAHAN, MENOR, PINE, TSUNEYOSHI, WATERS.

I hereby certify that the above is a true record of action by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu on this RESOLUTION.


GLEN I. TAKAHASHI, CITY CLERK


IKAIKA ANDERSON, CHAIR AND PRESIDING OFFICER